

Missing Man's Bloody Trace

APR 22 1976

ALAMO—The bloodstained and bullet-shattered auto of a 33-year-old Pleasant Hill man was found here yesterday by a friend, but authorities said there was no sign of the vehicle's owner.

Joel Stephens is the manager of the same Oakland bill-collection agency that Gary R. Brown, 30, managed before he was found shot to death in his Rockridge district home last November.

Investigators said the two men were "best of friends" and were also partners in other business interests.

Mr. Stephens' car was found by another friend, Bill McElhinney, of Alamo, parked on a road about 100 yards from Mr. McElhinney's home.

Mr. McElhinney told investigators Mr. Stephens called him Tuesday afternoon and said he would visit Mr. McElhinney's home that day, but he never arrived.

Mr. Stephens' wife, Marlissa, told Contra Costa sheriff's deputies her husband left home at about 9 p.m. Tuesday, saying he would be gone about an hour, and never returned.

When his car was found, the ignition and headlight switches were both on. Windows in the driver and passenger doors were both shot out, but investigators noted none of the window glass had fallen outside the car.

Mrs. Stephens was to file an official missing person report on her husband with Pleasant Hill police today.

He is manager of the Central Adjustment Bureau, 235 W. MacArthur Blvd.,

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Owner Sought

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the same firm that had been managed by Mr. Brown before his murder. Spokesmen for the firm refused to say whether Mr. Stephens had replaced Mr. Brown.

Mr. Brown was last seen alive last Thanksgiving Day. He did not report to work the following day, and his body was found in a bedroom at 5416 Golden Gate Ave. on Nov. 28 by another occupant of the house, Michael Murphy.

Mr. Brown's murder remains unsolved.

Oakland Slaying No. 115

NOV 29 1975

An Oakland collection agency manager was found shot to death yesterday in his Rockridge district home near the Claremont Country Club.

The body of Gary R. Brown, 30, was found in a bedroom of the three-level house at 5416 Golden Gate Ave. at about 5 p.m. by another occupant of the house, Michael Murphy.

It was not known how long Brown had been dead. He became Oakland's 115th homicide of the year, a new record. The previous record for a year was 112 in 1973.

Brown was last seen Thanksgiving Day, and he did not go to work yesterday, according to police.

Homicide Sergeants Jim Simonson and John Shannahan said there was no sign of a

struggle or forced entry and burglary apparently was not the motive because the house had not been ransacked.

Authorities said Brown was a collection manager for the

Central Adjustment Bureau, 235 West MacArthur Blvd. His ~~name~~ ~~did not include repeating~~ ~~cars and collecting debt.~~

In another shooting yesterday an Oakland woman is being held by police after she allegedly shot her estranged husband as he attempted to force his way into her apartment.

Wayne Gilbert, 25, is in critical condition at Highland Hospital with a head wound. His wife, Betty Ann Gilbert, 22, was taken into custody at her apartment at 1125 E. 18th St. and booked for investigation of assault with a deadly weapon.

She told police she had been separated from her husband for about a month. She said she refused to let him into the apartment and that he broke a window to gain access. She said she shot him as he came through the window.